

§ 2200.104

the Commission, it shall take precedence on the docket of the Judge to whom it is assigned, or on the Commission's review docket, as applicable, over all other classes of cases, and shall be set for hearing or for the submission of briefs at the earliest practicable date.

(d) *Time sequence set by Judge.* The assigned Judge shall make rulings with respect to time for filing of pleadings and with respect to all other matters, without reference to times set forth in these rules, may order daily transcripts of the hearing, and shall do all other things appropriate to complete the proceeding in the minimum time consistent with fairness.

§ 2200.104 Standards of conduct.

(a) *General.* All representatives appearing before the Commission and its Judges shall comply with the letter and spirit of the Model Rules of Professional Conduct of the American Bar Association.

(b) *Misbehavior before a Judge—(1) Exclusion from a proceeding.* A Judge may exclude from participation in a proceeding any person, including a party or its representative, who engages in disruptive behavior, refuses to comply with orders or rules of procedure, continuously uses dilatory tactics, refuses to adhere to standards of orderly or ethical conduct, or fails to act in good faith. The cause for the exclusion shall be stated in writing, or may be stated in the record if the exclusion occurs during the course of the hearing. Where the person removed is a party's attorney or other representative, the Judge shall suspend the proceeding for a reasonable time for the purpose of enabling the party to obtain another attorney or other representative.

(2) *Appeal rights if excluded.* Any attorney or other representative excluded from a proceeding by a Judge may, within five days of the exclusion, appeal to the Commission for reinstatement. No proceeding shall be delayed or suspended pending disposition of the appeal.

(c) *Disciplinary action by the Commission.* If an attorney or other representative practicing before the Commission engages in unethical or unprofessional conduct or fails to comply with any

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rule or order of the Commission or its Judges, the Commission may, after reasonable notice and an opportunity to show cause to the contrary, and after hearing, if requested, take any appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension or disbarment from practice before the Commission.

(d) *Show cause orders.* All show cause orders issued by the Commission or Judge under paragraph (c) of this section shall be served upon the affected party by certified mail, return receipt requested.

[51 FR 32015, Sept. 8, 1986, as amended at 55 FR 22783, June 4, 1990]

§ 2200.105 Ex parte communication.

(a) *General.* Except as permitted by § 2200.120 or as otherwise authorized by law, there shall be no ex parte communication with respect to the merits of any case not concluded, between any Commissioner, Judge, employee, or agent of the Commission who is employed in the decisional process and any of the parties or intervenors, representatives or other interested persons.

(b) *Disciplinary action.* In the event an ex parte communication occurs, the Commission or the Judge may make such orders or take such actions as fairness requires. The exclusion of a person by a Judge from a proceeding shall be governed by § 2200.104(b). Any disciplinary action by the Commission, including suspension or disbarment, shall be governed by § 2200.104(c).

(c) *Placement on public record.* All ex parte communications in violation of this section shall be placed on the public record of the proceeding.

[51 FR 32015, Sept. 8, 1986, as amended at 70 FR 22790, May 3, 2005]

§ 2200.106 Amendment to rules.

The Commission may at any time upon its own motion or initiative, or upon written suggestion of any interested person setting forth reasonable grounds therefor, amend or revoke any of the rules contained herein. The Commission invites suggestions from interested parties to amend or revoke rules of procedure. Such suggestions should

be addressed to the Executive Secretary of the Commission at One Lafayette Centre, 1120 20th Street, NW., Suite 980, Washington, DC 20036-3457.

[70 FR 22790, May 3, 2005]

§ 2200.107 Special circumstances; waiver of rules.

In special circumstances not contemplated by the provisions of these rules and for good cause shown, the Commission or Judge may, upon application by any party or intervenor or on their own motion, after 3 working days notice to all parties and intervenors, waive any rule or make such orders as justice or the administration of the Act requires.

[57 FR 41688, Sept. 11, 1992]

§ 2200.108 Official Seal of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

The seal of the Commission shall consist of: A gold eagle outspread, head facing dexter, a shield with 13 vertical stripes superimposed on its breast, holding an olive branch in its claws, the whole superimposed over a plain solid white Greek cross with a green background, encircled by a white band edged in black and inscribed "Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission" in black letters.

[51 FR 32015, Sept. 8, 1986; 52 FR 13832, Apr. 27, 1987]

Subpart H—Settlement Part

SOURCE: 64 FR 8246, Feb. 19, 1999, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2200.120 Settlement procedure.

(a) *Voluntary Settlement*—(1) *Applicability and duration.* (i) This section applies only to notices of contests by employers, and to applications for fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act and 29 CFR Part 2204.

(ii) Upon motion of any party after the docketing of the notice of contest, or otherwise with the consent of the parties at any time in the proceedings, the Chief Administrative Law Judge may assign a case to a Settlement Judge for proceedings under this section. In the event either the Secretary or the employer objects to the use of a

Settlement Judge procedure, such procedure shall not be imposed.

(2) *Length of voluntary settlement procedures.* The settlement procedures under this section shall be for a period not to exceed 45 days.

(b) *Mandatory settlement*—(1) *Applicability.* This section applies only to notices of contest by employers in which the aggregate amount of the penalties sought by the Secretary is \$100,000 or greater.

(2) *Proceedings under this part.* (i) *Assignment of case and appointment of Settlement Judge.* Notwithstanding any other provisions of these rules, upon the docketing of the notice of contest the Chief Administrative Law Judge shall assign to the Settlement Part any case which satisfies the criteria set forth in paragraph (b)(1) of this section. The Chief Administrative Law Judge shall appoint a Settlement Judge, who shall be a Judge other than the one assigned to hear and decide the case, except as provided in paragraph (f)(2) of this section.

(ii) *Discovery proceedings to be followed by settlement proceedings.* The Settlement Judge shall issue a discovery scheduling order and supervise all discovery proceedings. At the conclusion of discovery the Settlement Judge will conduct settlement proceedings during a period not to exceed 60 days. If, at the conclusion of the settlement proceedings the case has not been settled the Settlement Judge shall promptly notify the Chief Administrative Law Judge in accordance with paragraph (f) of this section.

(c) *Powers and duties of Settlement Judges.* (1) The Judge shall confer with the parties on subjects and issues of whole or partial settlement of the case and seek resolution of as many of the issues as is feasible.

(2) The Judge may require the parties to provide statements of the issues in controversy and the factual predicate for each party's position on each issue and may enter other orders as appropriate to facilitate the proceedings.

(3) In voluntary settlement proceedings the Judge may allow or suspend discovery during the settlement proceedings.